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Saving the Nation by Sacrificing Your Life: Authoritarianism and Chiang Kai-shek's War for the Retaking of China

Isabelle CHENG

Abstract: This article examines the role assigned to citizens by the ideology of authoritarianism in the relationship between Chiang Kai-shek's war to retake mainland China and the wartime regime constructed for fighting that war. Viewing Chiang's ambition of retaking China by force as an anti-communist nationalist war, this paper considers this prolonged civil war as Chiang's attempt at restoring the impaired sovereignty of the Republic of China. Adopting the concept of "necropolitics," this paper argues that what underlay the planning for war was the manipulation of the life and death of the citizenry and a distinction drawn between the Chinese nation to be saved and the condemned communist Other. This manipulation and demarcation was institutionally enforced by an authoritarian government that violated citizens' human rights for the sake of winning the nationalist war.

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Citizens in the Total War Prosecuted by Authoritarianism

How should we understand the relationship between Chiang Kai-shek's (Jiang Jieshi) declaration of war against the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) and the wartime regime built by his authoritarian government for fighting this war? The war against the CCP was announced to the Chinese nation in Taiwan as a "total war," and to the armed forces as a "revolutionary war" – with a strong emphasis on political and psychological means. The demand for the citizenry's unreserved commitment to sacrifice, and the priority given to the spiritual and ideological uniformity of the armed forces, raise the fundamental question of how the citizenry was utilised by the government for this military offensive, which was envisaged as being conducted on a massive scale.

In this context, this paper seeks to understand how authoritarianism in its prosecution of wars militarises the citizenry and utilises its constituents as material fighting resources. Maintaining a standing force by conscription or recruitment defines the modern nation state. It requires a sovereign decision to determine who is drafted to fight against a selected enemy, internally or externally, and who must thus endure the consequences of fighting – including death.

In this light, this paper proposes that "necropolitics" (Mbembé 2003) is an appropriate analytical concept for understanding the role of the citizen in an armed conflict conducted by an oppressive regime. Vested in sovereignty, necropolitics is the exercise of political authority by government agencies or via public policies that (pre)-determines life and death among the citizenry in order to serve the interests of the state. While necropolitics is, by definition, embedded in the sovereignty of the nation state, it was particularly embraced by the authoritarian government of Taiwan at the peak of the Cold War in service of the government's determination to resume the previously lost civil war against the CCP. Demanding the participation of the entire nation, this war was morally justified as the means to obliterate the non-constitutional CCP insurgency and restore the damaged sovereignty of the Republic of China (ROC) in mainland China. In this war, the citizenry was essentialised as a military instrument for fighting the war as well as being emotively mobilised to conform to the prevailing state ideology. They were required to unreservedly

dedicate their lives, allegiance, and material resources to accomplishing the goals pursued by the authoritarian government.

To delineate how necropolitics is embedded within the authoritarian government's war plans, this article will first review the current literatures on the studying of war plans of retaking China and focusing on authoritarianism in regard to the party-state, democratisation, and transitional justice. Arguing that these bodies of work are insufficiently able to help us to grasp the reciprocal support between political oppression and military ambition, this article will elaborate the concept of necropolitics and outline its embeddedness in sovereignty – for the purpose of exploring how the authoritarian government in Taiwan was able to prepare for a war to retake China during the 1950s and 1960s. With the analytical concept explained, the article will then discuss the formation of the wartime regime – including the adoption of the National Mobilisation Plan and the development of Project Guoguang (國光計畫, *guoguang jihua*), the most elaborate of the war plans overseen by Chiang Kai-shek and being a series of military reforms indispensible for war preparations.

In this context, this article will focus on certain incidents that underline the intentions behind and limitations of necropolitics. Examples are Chiang's speech delivered to visiting overseas Chinese delegates as well as his decisions over drafting native Taiwanese soldiers to the standing force and, particularly, deploying them to the front line. Arguing that necropolitics is most evident in the meticulous planning of Project Guoguang, this article will move on to then analyse how the Project's staff assessed the insurmountable obstacles that caused the war plans to finally be shelved. To emphasise how necropolitics at this scale could not be institutionalised without the collaboration of political oppression, the final section of this article will analyse how martial law made the Nationalist Party (Kuomintang, KMT, Guomindang) a fearsome authoritarian regime that "othered" citizens as communist sympathisers and, in some cases, deprived them of their lives without even sending them to the battlefield. The above analyses benefit from the use of a wide range of archival sources, including both unpublished ones and those published by the government – in addition to published memoirs, diaries, biographical essays, and oral history transcripts.

The Authoritarian Government and the War Never Fought

Before Chiang Kai-shek's diaries and key governmental archives were made publicly available, it was generally agreed that Chiang's determination to retake China was a disguise for propaganda at best or justification for authoritarianism at worst (e.g. Rawnsley 1999; Yang Huei-pang 2014). Commentaries during the 1960s positively evaluated the ROC military's ability to withstand an invasion by the People's Liberation Army (PLA), but dismissed the former's capability of initiating an all-out campaign against the PLA (Kallgren 1963; Karnow 1963). Overall, Chiang's claimed determination to launch the war has been portrayed as an example of the dictator's military brinkmanship and political expediency, as the government's appropriation of a containment strategy for survival within the global situation of bipolar antagonism, and as a manifestation of an anti-communist nationalism imbued with geopolitical interests (Tsang 1993; Chang Su-ya 2001, 2003, 2016; Lin Cheng-yi 2012, 2016).

However, a reading of Chiang's diaries suggests that for him recovering mainland China was to fulfil his moral obligation of overturning Soviet imperialism (Chang Su-ya 2011; Yeh 2016). The opening of the archives of Project Guoguang (國光計畫, *guoguang jihua*) proves that from 1961 to 1972, Chiang personally oversaw the drafting and drilling of a large-scale military plan for attacking China (MND 2005a). What is also being proved is that prior to Project Guoguang, there had already been a series of war plans developed by the military (MND 2005a; Chou and Chen 2014; Yeh 2016). This revelation has enabled military and diplomatic historians to uncover the geopolitical intrigue in Taiwan (among the civilian and military-security elites) and in the United States (between the White House, State Department, Pentagon, Capitol Hill, Central Intelligence Agency, and the US Pacific Command). The orchestration of these war plans has been mostly depicted by historians as a concerted rational and lineal exercise of charting security parameters, assessing geopolitical interests, extracting material resources, and measuring military capabilities (Lin Hsiao-ting 2011, 2013, 2014, 2015, 2016; Chen 2012, 2013, 2014b, 2015a, 2015b; Kung 2007; Yang 2013).

Drawn to the details of diplomatic negotiations and military appraisals, these historical studies conceived the conscripting and arm-

ing of a standing force as part of Taiwan's overall military build-up. As such, they treated the existence of the authoritarian government and the composition of the armed forces as an empirical given. They did not question why and how citizens were utilised as fighting bodies by a government in exile that did not have unchallenged control over the population under its jurisdiction. Overlooking the political backup rendered by authoritarianism to military expansion, they missed an opportunity to scrutinise whether the proposed military campaigns enjoyed unequivocal support within the authoritarian government. Insensitivity to the political terrain lying underneath the diplomatic and military manoeuvring leaves a critical question unanswered; that is, how authoritarianism seizes the authority of sovereignty, circumscribes the constitution, and deploys citizens as military and political resources on the battlefield – as well as on the home front, too.

When the focus does turn to political oppression, it is obvious that scholarship on authoritarianism tends to downplay the "realness" of the war. Because the field is dominated by political scientists, authoritarianism is mostly conceptualised as a political system rather than as a "deformed" constitutional order. As a prototype of the party-state, authoritarianism tends to be studied in terms of how the state apparatus is overshadowed by party departments and public sector personnel infiltrated by party cells; thereby, the analytical unit is the political party, measured by power, rather than the institution, measured by legality.

As such, the focus is on how the KMT monopolised power away from the state. To measure the level of power concentration, such scholarship aimed at empirically proving that the KMT not only usurped power but also penetrated the government, military, and indeed all sectors of society. For example, Winckler (1981) argued that the KMT was a Leninist party, in that it controlled a police state dominated by military interests – and that it was an unusual regime that absorbed the interests of security, economics, and ideology. Dickson (1993) drew attention to the party's reform of the Central Committee between 1950 and 1952, arguing that this led to the establishment of party cells throughout the government, military, and society (see also, Kung 1998). The analysis of Myers (2009) was that the KMT's reform in the early 1950s laid the foundation for an authoritarian party-state, not only by recruiting native Taiwanese members but also by winning local-level elections (see also, Wu 1987; Jen

2011). Another strand of scholarship focuses on the KMT's fettering of education (Liu 2012), by such means as dispatching military instructors to high schools and universities (Lee 2011), and on the establishing of the Chinese Anti-Communist National Salvation Youth Corps (中國青年反共救國團, *Zhongguo qingnian fangong jiuguotuan*) (Brindley 1999; Lee 2014). That happened in spite of it causing a widespread outcry, such as in the articles published by the liberal magazine Free China (自由中國, *ziyou Zhongguo*) (Chang Shu-mei 2016).

Beginning in the mid-1980s, research into authoritarianism in Taiwan gradually moved away from the KMT's hallmarks as a Leninist party to its transformation. As part of the so-called third wave of democratisation (Huntington 1991), it was argued that the KMT in the 1990s became the only Leninist party – one that remained in power by winning competitive elections (Winckler 1984; Dickson 1993; Tsang 1999). This focus on the KMT's democratisation has been followed by more recent examination of the origins and patterns of violence endorsed by the coercive state apparatus (Greitens 2013: 64–134) and the debate on transitional justice, as partly shown in the controversy over removing references to Chiang from public spaces (Taylor 2010; Taylor and Huang 2012). Detailing cases of the "White Terror," these studies revealed the degree of suspension of citizenship and the violation of human rights as a result of political purges persecuted in the name of national security, political stability, anti-communism, treason, or preventing subversion.

Shifting the analytical unit from the party to state institutions and measuring legality, these studies challenged the legitimacy and constitutionality of numerous "special" laws and decrees that disrupted the implementation of the ROC Constitution and conferred on the executive branch of the government excessive authority and power (Chen 2016; Su 2008; Yang Hsiu-chin 2014). They disregarded the government's propensity for plunging the nation living on the island into the war against the CCP on the mainland. They thus dismissed the government's prioritisation of selflessness, sacrifice, nationalism, patriotism, and collectivism as warmongering for political gain. Therefore, although foregrounding the government's abuses as justified by wartime necessity, they overlooked how the citizenry was essentialised by the authoritarian government as a fighting body, and how this impersonal militarisation was factored into the rational, practical, and technical calculations of human resources for war preparations.

The above review suggests that it is critical to centralise the conceptual and empirical correlation between war and authoritarianism in the context of the institutionalisation of political oppression that was deemed necessary to realise war mobilisation. This is particularly so given that the authoritarian government was enmeshed in a sociopolitically volatile environment where conflicts were rife between the minority of refugee mainlanders (外省人, *waishengren*) and the majority of native Taiwanese (本省人, *benshengren*). Being liberalists, dissidents, reformists, or pursuers of independence, elites and ordinary citizens alike among both groups opposed or criticised the party-state and orthodox Chinese nationalism on a variety of grounds. In this light, the citizenry – particularly its internal strife – is at the centre of the mutually reinforcing constitution of war and authoritarianism. To underline the role of the citizenry, this paper applies the aforementioned concept of necropolitics – the instrumentalisation of the life and death of the citizenry – to the analysis of the war against the People Republic of China (PRC) as pursued by the authoritarian government at the peak of the Cold War. It is in light of this institutional insight that Chiang's unshaken determination to eradicate the CCP and his government's glorification of citizens' sacrifice for a nationalist cause can be understood as intrinsic to the authoritarianism that operated in the name of sovereignty.

Necropolitics: The Instrumentalisation of Life and Death by Sovereignty

As mentioned above, annihilating the CCP by force was proclaimed by Chiang and his authoritarian government as the means to recover ROC sovereignty. Characterising this nationalist war as "revolutionary warfare" (e.g. OCAC 1967: 42; MND 2005a: 15), Chiang gave instructions that it could not be waged entirely by military operations but rather by a formula of "thirty per cent military means, seventy per cent political means" (三分軍事, 七分政治, *sanfen junshi, qifen zhengzhi*) (Chen 2015a: 45). In its implementation, the "political means" – or the "intangible forces" – were a conglomeration of propaganda, indoctrination, and irregular warfare. In practice, it included publicising Taiwan's prosperity (relative to China) (e.g. OCAC 1967: 9, 14) and uprisings in China (e.g. OCAC 1967: 18, 23, 24, 41), instigating defection and inciting insurrection in China (Lin 2015: 76–108), landing

special forces or guerrilla fighters to sabotage strategic infrastructure and collect intelligence in China's coastal areas and southwest hinterlands (Schoenhals 2012; Wang et al. 1996; Chen 2013; Hsiao 2014; Yeh 2016), and instilling in the people of Taiwan as well as overseas Chinese the morality of saving the Chinese nation from the destructive communist ideology and Soviet Russia's imperialist suppression (Chiang 1957). The stress on intangible forces indicated that Chiang was acutely, and rationally, aware of the inability of the ROC military to launch a war against the CCP independent of US support (e.g. OCAC 1967: 44–45). Thus, emotive politics in the form of extolling sacrifice for nationalism is indispensable to the rationality of military operations (e.g. Lai 2016: 43). It is this inherent link between human sacrifice and sovereignty that warrants the application of the concept of necropolitics to analysing the intricate relationship between Chiang's nationalist war and the authoritarian government.

Sovereignty is said to be the ultimate and inalienable authority within a defined territory. This territorialised authority confers legitimacy on a government for its monopoly on the means of violence in the form of penal punishment, when law and order is at risk, and recourse to war – when enmity arises (Mbembé 2003: 22). In both instances, the authority to deprive citizens of their lives can be justified, enhanced, or hastened as a matter of necessity. Mbembé emphasises the synergy between the sovereign mandate and the resultant appropriation of human lives. He proposes that "to exercise sovereignty is to exercise control over mortality and to define life as the deployment and manifestation of power." (Mbembé 2003: 11–12). Necropolitics is thus defined as the sovereign power which "dictate[s] who *may* live and who *must* die" (Mbembé 2003: 11–12, italics added for emphasis). Mbembé stresses the irrationality of sovereignty, arguing that it leads to the "generalised instrumentalisation of human existence and the destructions of human bodies and populations" (Mbembé 2003: 13–14). Therefore, citizens are appropriated as objects fit for serving specific interests defined and pursued by the state; their autonomy and rationality can be removed, restricted, or suspended in the name of fighting a war declared by the sovereign power.

However, sovereignty is, by definition, an institution of morality that ensures the survival of the state and of citizens. In a state of emergency, the necessity of removing the threat to the survival of the state and its citizens brings into being the antagonism between the

Self, constituted by the state and its citizens, and the Other, who poses a threat. Extrapolating from this insight, this paper proposes that when animosity arises from within, a certain category of people among citizens are singled out from the population and marginalised as the Other. Regardless of where the boundary between the Self and the Other is drawn internally among the citizenry or erected externally between two warring states, sovereignty bestows on the government the legitimacy to terminate the existence of the Other, which may be achieved by depriving them of their lives. More critically, the very act of "termination" or "deprivation" could not be undertaken were there not a group of citizens who are appropriated by the sovereign power as the instrument of killing.

In other words, to maintain the continuation of the Self some citizens – particularly those within the military-security apparatus – due to their chosen profession or to an endowed responsibility by conscription are delegated to kill. When the eradication of the enemy requires the involvement of the entire citizenry – such as a total war, as defined by Chiang for fighting against the CCP – then total mobilisation is called for as part of the readiness for self-sacrifice. Thus, killing and saving are paradoxically ingrained in sovereignty; they become an impersonal exercise of power justifiably consuming human lives (Mbembé 2003: 17). Sovereignty is thus a morally ambiguous institution that is committed to salvation while it also simultaneously condones killing; its instrumentalisation of the life and death of its own citizens belies the proclaimed morality of saving lives.

Placing Chiang's nationalist war in the context of this moral paradox, it becomes clear that the citizenry holds the key to the militarisation facilitated by authoritarianism that drove the people of the island to engage in destruction in the name of national salvation. The CCP, together with its fighting arm the PLA, was the condemned Other in the ROC's constitutional order. The communist ideology was denounced as alien to Chinese culture, and harmful for the Chinese nation's political and socio-economic development. The PRC's leaning towards the Soviet Union allowed it to be accused of succumbing to an imperial power that had caused the nation's suffering (e.g. Chiang 1950: 253). In opposition to the condemned CCP, the "compatriots" in mainland China were part of the national Self who had to be saved – by the use of force by citizens in Taiwan – from the communists' oppression. Moreover, as shown below, citizens in Tai-

wan were also internally divided into the opposing categories of Self and Other, the boundaries of which were drawn aribitarily by the authoritarian government in accordance with their perceived political orientations. Liberalists, anti-government dissenters, or independence supporters were denounced as communist sympathisers, thus being the condemned Other. The demarcation of this Self–Other boundary held the key to the authoritarian government's pursuit of the nationalist war.

With the analytical framework instated, the following pages will now investigate how necropolitics was embedded in the war preparations of the authoritarian government. The paper will first concentrate on "National Mobilisation" (國家總動員, *guojia zong dongyuan*) in conjunction with two major conscription campaigns in 1954–1955. It will demonstrate how the government dealt with citizens' fear, suffering, and with the casualties caused by the war. How these challenges arose and the ways in which they were dealt with will make visible the existence of necropolitics, and outline the boundary between the saved Self and the denounced Other. I will then move on to examine how Project Guoguang arose from the political and security environment within and surrounding Taiwan at the time, and how it planned military offensives against the CCP.

The focus of this investigation is on the Project staff's unmistakable understanding of insurmountable practical constraints and, potentially, resultant massive casualties. The difficulties encountered by the Project's staff will illuminate how the demarcation between the Self and the Other within the citizenry of Taiwan was reified by the authoritarian government so as to quell dissent or resistance – which might have challenged the raison d'être of authoritarian rule. These investigations are built on the use of several key primary source materials, such as the minutes of the Military Meeting (軍事會談, *junshi huitan*), a top-secret weekly meeting chaired by Chiang, interview transcripts (MND 2005a, 2005b; IMH 1995), governmental archives (Chou 1997; Chou and Chen 2014; ROC General Consulate in Yokohama 1962; CIA 1965), a personal diary (Lai 2016), a memoir (Ke 2002), autobiographical essays (Huang 1997), a government publication (OCAC 1967), and a publication that was compiled by the Ministry of National Defence (MND) in 1987 and eventually declassified in 2012 (MND 1987).

Dying for a Nationalist Mission and Living under an Authoritarian Regime

The Development of a Wartime Regime

Necropolitics as the othering and destruction of the CCP characterises the ROC's political development during and after the Chinese Civil War. Key legislation that underlay the institutionalisation of necropolitics in the mainland included the implementation of National Mobilisation in 1947 and, in the following year, the promulgation of the Temporary Provisions Effective during the Period of National Mobilisation for the Suppression of Communist Rebellion (動員戡亂時期臨時條款, *dongyuan kanluan shiqi linshi tiaokuan*) (henceforth the Temporary Provisions) in mainland China. When law and order in Taiwan was threatened by the influx of refugees crossing the Taiwan Strait in the wake of the KMT's defeat on the mainland, martial law was announced in 1949 and ratified in 1950 – during which time the island was proclaimed a war zone (MND 1987: 801). Together with martial law, National Mobilisation was put into effect in the 1950s. During the 1960s, the Temporary Provisions not only lifted the limit on presidential terms (Article 3) but also conferred on the president expedient power to adopt measures or establish organisations that might be deemed necessary for fighting the war (Articles 4 and 5).

War Plans and Military Reform in the Changing Security Environment

In parallel to the implementation of National Mobilisation in the mid-1950s, a series of war plans were delineated. The military studied the feasibility of and challenges arising from different levels of hostility, including a surprise attack, limited engagement, a large-scale campaign (Chen 2014b: 293–359), and a regional campaign launched from the Chinese–Burmese bordering area that was reinforced by parachuting in special forces (Yeh 2016). Succeeding these earlier attempts, and established in 1961, Project Guoguang was the most comprehensive war plan to date, one that was staffed by elite officers on loan from the army, navy, and air force. Known as the Guoguang Operation Office (國光作業室, *guoguan zouyeshi*), the staff were led by a lieutenant general and answered directly to Chiang Kai-shek (MND

2005a). Its planning demonstrated the scale of casualties, or the degree of the manipulation of citizens' lives and deaths, that was rationally calculated by the wartime regime to accomplish the termination of the communist Other and the salvation of the Chinese compatriots on the mainland.

While war plans were under consideration, the Anti-Communist Salvation Army (反共救國軍, *fangong jiuguo jun*), an irregular force trained by the US Central Intelligence Agency and based on islands close to China, raided Chinese coastal areas in 1951–1954 (Holober 1999). However, before the military could realistically contemplate a war, the armed forces had to undergo significant reform in order to improve their interservice operation, modernise their armaments, and enhance their ideological conformity. These goals were achieved in the 1950s. The number of army divisions was streamlined, and the remaining ones were restructured in order to reimpose Chiang's unchallenged control and clip the influence of the US-favoured George Li-jen Sun (Sun Liren) (Chen 2015b; Lin 2016; Yang 2011). Military officers, civil servants, and party cadres were selected to attend the Institute of Revolution and Practice (革命實踐研究院, *gemin shijian yanjiuyuan*) for unifying their political orientation (Lu 2003; Jen 2011).

Forced through by Chiang Ching-kuo (Jiang Jingguo), a Soviet-style political commissar system was imposed in 1950 despite resistance among commanders on the basis of its interference with their authority as well as the criticism of it by the US (Chen 2014a; Bullard 1996: 80–100). Recruited in mainland China in 1948 and founded in 1949 in southern Taiwan (MND 2005b: 1), the Women's Army Corps (女青年工作大隊, *nü qingnian gongzou dadui*) was sent down and deployed among rank-and-file soldiers for political indoctrination, communication, recreation, as well as for teaching Mandarin (Hua 2000; MND 2005b: 7–8). Known as the White Group (白團, *baituan*), former Japanese military personnel were not only entrusted by Chiang with training troops and elite officers (Chiang 1950: 255–259; Lin 1996; Chen 2005; Lin 2013; Kushner 2013; Tsuyoshi 2015), but also with developing a war plan (Lin 2015: 121–122; Chou and Chen 2014: 346–604).

In 1954, the ROC–US Mutual Defence Treaty was signed without clarifying whether the security alliance applied to islands closer to China's coast (Wang 2014; Lin Hsiao-ting 2016; Chang 1994, 2016). Earlier arms sales by the US were made possible via commercial

channels (Lin 2011), but their official transfer was later facilitated thanks to the Defence Treaty. The superpower's training doctrines were implemented under the close watch of the US Military Assistance Advisory Group (MAAG), who eventually succeeded in confining the influence of the shadowy White Group (Lin 2015: 120). In coordination with the US, the government evacuated troops and the civilian population from Dachen and Yijianshan to Taiwan in 1955 (Military Meetings, 5, 12, 19 February 1955) and withstood the PLA's intensive shelling of Jinmen in 1958 (Chang and He 1993).

While these reforms gradually strengthened the ROC military into a force capable of withstanding a PLA invasion, the strategic environment surrounding Taiwan in the 1950s and the early 1960s was rapidly evolving. Entangled with the unfolding Cold War in East Asia, Taiwan was unexpectedly protected by the neutralisation of the Taiwan Strait in the wake of the Korean War from 1950 onwards (Fellman 2012). The PLA's participation in that war prompted Chiang to propose an attack on China by the ROC military, but his offer was turned down by the US (Yeh 2016: 152; Lin 2015: 122–123). Later geopolitical parameters were positively assessed by the military for launching the war, such as the Sino–Soviet split under Nikita Khrushchev, the enhanced relationship between the USSR and North Korea, the USSR's intervention in Laos, the CCP's acquisition of nuclear capabilities (Lai 2016: 295–299, 302, 311), and the protracted US involvement in the Vietnam War (Lai 2016: 313, 357, 359). Capitalising on anti-communist interests shared with South Vietnam, Chiang was enticed by the prospect of conducting guerrilla warfare in Vietnam and in the Thai–Burmese borderlands so as to support a surprise attack from Taiwan on China's southeast coast (MND 2005a: 11, 264, 476; Huang 2013; Yeh 2016).

Self Versus Other in the National Mobilisation and Conscription

In the midst of these critical developments, in 1954 the conscription model originally inherited from the Japanese (Ke 2002: 98–99) was revamped, whereby the reserve system was established – therein learning from the both Japanese and US experiences (Military Meeting, 9 April 1955). As a result, not only was the quality of the standing force improved but also the resupply of human resources from native

Taiwanese males was institutionalised. In anticipation of the war, on 25 November 1955 Chiang approved the National Mobilisation Plan (國家總動員計畫, *guojia zong dongyuan jihua*) that was drafted by the National Defence Council (NDC) (國防會議, *guofang huiyi*). The following month, the NDC instructed the cabinet to muster all available civilian and military resources for war readiness (Chou 1997: 309–388). To dissolve potential resistance among citizens to the war and strengthen their endurance (Chou 1997: 326), a Spiritual Mobilisation Plan (精神動員計畫, *jingshen dongyuan jihua*) was prepared along with four other sub-plans for total mobilisation. Exclusively framed around the Otherness of the CCP, this ideological campaign aimed at supporting anti-communist patriotic literature, strengthening the national spirit, promoting social reforms centring on austerity, conducting psychological warfare in China, anchoring public opinions, and censoring the press (Chou 1997: 324–325). Necropolitics, in the form of Chinese nationalism and sinicisation indoctrinating more the native Taiwanese population, was thus incorporated into the plans for national mobilisation.

Necropolitics also featured in Chiang's political communications, with his recognition of a necessary and inevitable sacrifice (see Lams and Lu in this issue, for their analysis of Chiang's public speeches). Twenty days before Chiang approved the National Mobilisation Plan, on 5 November 1955, a reception hosted by he and Madame Chiang for the visiting overseas Chinese delegation was used to address the issue of war. He informed his audience of the increasing social unrest in China in the previous year, which, by his formula of revolutionary warfare, indicated that the time was ripe to strike. He asked his audience: "Under such circumstances, why has the government *not* launched the war?" (italics added for emphasis). Reciting the slogan of "prepare in the first year, attack in the second year, swift campaign in the third year, succeed in the fifth year" (一年準備，二年反攻，三年掃蕩，五年成功, *yinian zhunbei, liangnian fangong, sannian saodang, wunian chenggong*) that was first formulated by him in 1950 (Yeh 2016: 149), he acknowledged that the delay had been caused by the fact that his military forces had lost air and sea supremacy to the PLA – which had benefitted from the transfer of weaponry from the Soviets (OCAC 1967: 42–45). Nevertheless, he reassured his audience that the government would endeavour to win a swift and decisive victory in between five and seven years so as to "reduce the *pain* and shorten

the duration of the war" for the nation in Taiwan, and equally importantly, to spare their mainland compatriots from suffering devastation in war (OCAC 1967: 42–43; emphasis added).

Intending to arouse the nationalist sentiments of his overseas Chinese audience, Chiang's rhetoric revealed how the boundaries between the Self and the Other were drawn and thus how life and death were predetermined in the exectution of this anti-communist war. That is, the war was justified not only on the grounds of restoring the constitutional order but also of eradicating communist ideology and saving compatriots from the totalitarian CCP regime. Ideologically, these "twin" missions were indispensible from each other and imposing these both on the citizens in Taiwan was central to the process of indoctrination for both mainlanders and native Taiwanese – and for the sinicisation particularly of native Taiwanese. Instrumentalised for fulfilling these missions, the lives of citizens in Taiwan were demanded by the sovereignty for the purpose of killing the CCP and saving their mainland compatriots from the latter's totalitarian regime.

Necropolitics is further evident in the context of sinicisation, when the focus was on the potential casualties among Taiwanese soldiers. Known as "supplementary forces" (補充兵, *buchongbing*), native Taiwanese were originally exempt from deployment to the islands, including Dachen and Yijianshan (Hu 1976: 22), which were severely attacked by the PLA. On 8 January 1955, at the Military Meeting and concerned about the impact on "the hearts and minds of (native) Taiwanese" (臺灣民心, *Taiwan minxin*), Chiang criticised his subordinates over drafting native Taiwanese soliders to serve in the 84th Division – who were stationed in Dachen. While not overruling the statutory duration of two years service, Chiang gave two remedial orders: (1) deployment to the islands should not last longer than six months; (2) units returning from the islands should be given one-month leave (Military Meeting, 8 January 1955). Arguablly, his intention was to lessen the fear of death that had been simmering within the native population. In spite of sinicising native Taiwanese – including them in the National Self (the Chinese nation), and instilling patriotism in them – Chiang was shrewd about the implications of the failure of necropolitics, and did not harbour the illusion that he could demand their lives.

The implications of failing necropolitics continued to manifest via the micro-resistance among the native population after military forces and civilians were evacuated from Dachen to Taiwan. In the midst of a drafting drill, on 12 February 1955, at the Military Meeting the army commander reported that three Taiwanese conscripts in Tainan had cut off their right index fingers at home in the hope of evading conscription. The air force commander added that Taiwanese conscripts serving in Dachen were "much stricken by the fighting in Yijianshan" and that they were noted for being less disciplined than their mainland counterparts. Chiang then instructed the General Political Warfare Department to organise a publicity campaign so as to sanitise the "rumours" that might have been circulated by the 500-plus Taiwanese conscripts who had returned from the war zone (Military Meeting, 12 February 1955). On 9 April, at the Military Meeting, Chiang was briefed on the proceedings of two drafting drills that set their target totals of conscripts at 42,340 and 27,217 men respectively. The number of men who cut off their index fingers increased to 11. Nevertheless, Taiwanese conscripts were said to be in high morale; a rapport was said to have been established between mainlander and Taiwanese servicemen (Military Meeting, 9 April 1955). Although the minutes of this meeting did not record Chiang's comments, the briefings made by his subordinates suggested that they had tuned in to the political sensitivity of necropolitics.

Project Guoguang and Its Practical Difficulties

The sociopolitical turmoil in the aftermath of the "Great Leap Forward" in China was received by Chiang and the military as the signal for launching the war (MND 2005a: 15, 240, 354, 457; Wang 2006: 174–175). Project Guoguang was thus established in April 1961, aiming at launching a surprise attack on the coast of Fujian independent of US assistance – at least in the initial stages (MND 2005a: 14, 65). The ROC General Consulate in Yokohama (1962) reported that Japan had cautiously watched a series of telltale signs unfolding throughout the first half of 1962, such as: (1) in February and March, the Bureau of Military Administration in War Affected Zones (戰地政務局, *zhandi zhengwu ju*) (for its missions, see Bullard 1996: 105) and the Committee of Economic Mobilisation and Planning (經濟動員計畫委員會, *jingji dongyuan jihua weiyuanhui*) were founded respectively within the MND and under the Executive Yuan; (2) in late March,

Chiang announced that the time was ripe to strike; and, (3) in April, the Special Defence Budget (國防特別預算, *guofang tebei yusuan*) was adopted, followed by the implementation of the Special Defence Levy (國防特別捐, *guofang tebei juan*) – the duration of which ran up to June of the following year. Japan was also reported by the Consulate to have noted the US's open rejection of the use of force in East Asia (ROC General Consulate in Yokohama 1962: 1, 4).

As explicitly understood by Project Guoguang staff, the key to initiating the war was to obtain US support; as such, three scenarios were considered favourable for initiating the strike. They were: (1) military conflicts erupting inside China, and the US agreeing to be involved; (2) fierce factional struggles breaking out within the CCP leadership, and the US agreeing to be involved; and, (3) military conflicts arising in the Chinese border areas as a result of "international interventions," and the US agreeing to lend its support (MND 2005a: 58). However, messages sent internationally by the US clearly nullified the realism of any of these scenarios. It was noted by one of the Project's longest-serving staff members (Wang 2006: 201) that on 23 June 1962 the US informed the PRC at the "Ambassadorial Talk" in Warsaw of its opposition to Chiang's ambition, and that on 22 May 1963 President Kennedy openly announced that Chiang should consult with the US over his intended military actions against the CCP (MND 2005a: 194).

The US's objection was also unmistakably demonstrated in Taiwan by the MAAG's aggressive intelligence-gathering about Chiang's steadfast preparations for war (MND 2005a: 193–194). A tactic considered to create a fait accompli that could justify the ROC's assault and, hopefully, secure subsequent US support, was to parachute special forces into China so as to instigate local uprisings or even to occupy an area and "invite" the return of the KMT (MND 2005a: 193). However, no one – not even Chiang himself – could bank on the success of such infiltration (Lai 2016: 37) or on the presumed "embrace" by their mainland compatriots (MND 2005a: 193, 285). Such a lack of confidence highlights the cracks in necropolitics, since the boundaries between Self and Other were not as clear-cut as imagined. Therefore Project Guoguang's meticulous planning could not move further than Phase I, of attacking and landing (MND 2005a: 30–31).

In actuality, even the first stage of surprise attack proved too difficult to carry out. The Project's staff were challenged by lingering

problems that had already been identified by an earlier war plan, overseen by Vice President Chen Cheng (MND 2005a: 54–58). Two crucial obstacles, among others, were the shortage of troops and the inadequate capacity for force projection. It was estimated that, partly to offset an expected casualty toll of 50,000 lives, a total of 270,000 troops were required (MND 2005a: 53, 58). Jinmen would serve as a forward base for amphibious landings on Xiamen (MND 2005a: 56, 196, 310, 326; Szonyi 2008), whereby the reinforcements would be delivered by military vessels as well as by civilian boats. The overloaded navy had to raise its sealift capacity by levying and refitting merchant fleets (MND 2005a: 56–57). If the initial landing was successful, the ground forces would then meet the PLA's counter-attack and the PLA's reinforcements would arrive on D-5 Day, secured by the intensive PLA air strikes and denial of supplies to the ROC ground forces from the sea. A landing operation as such would involve one-third of the total mobilised troops, a scale that would have been objected to by the US – if this reluctant ally had indeed been consulted prior to the operation. If the landing was successful, the supply of materials to the ground forces was a task that could not be easily accomplished without US assistance (MND 2005a: 57–58).

Even if the mainlander military leadership's dedication to the nationalist cause was never in question (e.g. Lai 2016: 43, 52, 58, 63, 147, 196, 198, 301, 311, 337, 353, 367, 382, 384, 385), their professionalism nevertheless cast doubts over actually surmounting these practical challenges. The navy was acutely aware that, with all of the transport crafts at its disposal, the service was still unable to deliver all the men and their arms to the battlefield. Refitting merchant fleets might increase the headcounts of sealift capacity. However, soldiers crammed into these overcrowded vessels would lose their fighting ability prior to landing (MND 2005a: 87, 208–213, 307–308, 310, 324, 326, 379). The air force was also conscious of its insufficient capacity (Lai 2016: 23). Operating on an airlift capacity that was restricted by the US, the air force found it difficult to parachute troops from overloaded transport aircraft (MND 2005a: 214–215, 474). In essence, the difficulties envisaged by the staff manifested the constraint of necropolitics; should the war be fought, it would lead to massive casualties – a political decision that can only be made by the sovereign power.

Thus, although the war appeared imminent during 1961–1962, due to US opposition it was eventually put on hold (Wang 2006: 178–

185, 200–202). D-Day was held back to the summer of 1965; precisely, the critical decision of whether to go to war was to be made by 20 July (Lai 2016: 416, 426). There was an intense atmosphere in which "everyone knows we're about to strike" (MND 2005a: 282), and Chiang received some lower-ranking commanders whose units would be dispatched to the battlefield (MND 2005a: 206–207, 310–311, 379, 458). A retired colonel recalled that officers of the mobilised units were ordered to submit their wills to their superiors (author's private correspondence 2010; MND 2005a: 207). Being deployed to Jinmen in the 1960s, when the PLA blanketed the island with propaganda materials, also required the submission of will, as recalled by a retired officer of the Women's Army Corps (Anonymous 1 2017). Death as a consequence of war would not be a remote prospect for the mobilised troops.

However, as known to the world, D-Day was never ultimately announced; the war was never launched. Project Guoguang was shelved in 1972, not long after the ROC was ousted from the United Nations. If, as discussed above, the resistance of less than a dozen Taiwanese conscripts was considered by Chiang as a sign of social instability, then the political consequences of mobilising a total of 730,000 men between the ages of 21 and 35 – as proposed by the National Mobilisation Plan in March 1956 (Chou 1997: 351) – would have been unthinkable (MND 2005a: 311). The US pointed out the possibility of subversion in Taiwan should the latter attack China (CIA 1965). Therefore, Chiang and his government could not be naïve about the political risk of sending a considerable number of Taiwanese males to war against the CCP. The task of ameliorating the impact of necropolitics was left to the Taiwan Garrison High Command (臺灣警備總司令部, *Taiwan jinbai zong silingbu*) (henceforth, the Command) to ensure political stability.

Self Versus Other Among the Nation in Taiwan

The Command was a fearsome organisation, one that encompassed the missions of preventing communist penetration, ensuring public security, organising civil defence, and implementing national mobilisation (MND 1987: 774, 797–800; Fravel 2002). The Command grew to become an iron fist of authoritarianism, largely owing to the mandate of martial law. Under this, Taiwan was divided into four regions and 18 subregions. To put down any unrest and subversion breaking

out in Taiwan, regional commanders could coordinate the military police, the police force, and intelligence services besides their own forces – and, if necessary, army troops too (MND 1987: 803–804). The mandate of preventing penetration was conveniently used for suppressing the Taiwan independence movement, whose proponents were labelled as being CCP collaborators. Citizens' demands for democracy, freedom, and human rights were denounced as subversion assisted by "external forces" (MND 1987: 808–809). Labelled as communist sympathisers, independence supporters, liberalists, dissidents, and reformists, these individuals were criminalised by their political orientations and excluded from the national Self to be part of the condemned Other. Thrown into the opposing category, they were denounced as "the enemy within."

It is obvious that, in the eyes of the authoritarian government, Taiwan could not be an anti-communist bastion fit for war if the hearts and minds of the citizenry did not conform to the former's anti-communist Chinese nationalism. Should the spiritual mobilisation campaign mentioned above fail to unify the citizenry, the Command's expedient power to screen private thoughts was entrusted to carry out necropolitics by punishing those who deviated from the orthodox stance. Under the decrees issued by the Command (MND 1987: 829–830), ones consolidated in 1952, it conducted a "special inspection" (特檢, *tejian*) to censor publications and intercept mail for the purposes of counter-intelligence, counter-penetration, counter-sabotage, counter-united front, crime prevention, intelligence collection, and supporting clandestine operations in China. The intrusion into citizens' private correspondence went hand in hand with the monitoring of what they read and wrote privately in diaries or letters, and what they disseminated and published in public. Censorship supported the wartime regime by outlawing private thoughts and public information that was regarded as violating the fundamental policy of anti-communism, as damaging national security and public order, as opposing traditional Chinese culture, or, ironically, as damaging democracy and liberty (MND 1987: 840) (for censorship implemented in 1945–1949, see Dluhošová in this topical issue).

Therefore, the anti-communist campaign served a fundamental function – to distinguish the Self from the Other among citizens. This was effectively enforced by political purges or the military trials of liberalists and political dissidents (e.g. Su 2008; Yang Hsiu-chin

2014; Chen 2016), or by ordinary citizens being interned because of fabricated allegations (e.g. Ke 2002: 98–127). Exercised by a variety of military agencies, violence in the name of anti-communism was inflicted upon members and trainees of the Women's Army Corps – who were interned without trial (MND 2005b: 19, IMH 1995: 57–59, 79–83, 214–217, 240–241, 262–266, 363–365). Their alleged offences included "denouncing" the government in their diaries, befriending a CCP agent, establishing "secret organisations" in light of their inadvertent forming of a small friendship circle and collecting friends' photos, and being "communist sympathisers" because of their interest in Chinese or Russian leftist novels (Hua 2000: 80–85; MND 2005b: 20). A cook for the Women's Army Corps was tortured to death after being forced to confess to the charge fabricated against him that the food poisoning caused by his cooking was a communist plot (Hua 2000: 179–200).

These cases illuminate the arbitrariness of the exclusion of citizens, be they native Taiwanese or mainlanders, who were labelled as communist sympathisers – and who, as such, were separated from the national Self and endured the irreversible consequences (death or long-term imprisonment) of being condemned as the Other. A chilling message sent by these purges is that, under necropolitics, citizens – including those who had committed themselves to the nationalist cause – could lose their lives to their repressive government even without ever setting foot on the battlefield. Enduring the trauma and suffering the consequences (e.g. IMH 1995: 59–62), their families were also othered and became the "walking dead"[1] – whose livelihoods and well-being became part of the sacrifice demanded by the anti-communist ideology.

Conclusion

Focusing on the politicisation of the citizenry, this study contributes to our understanding of the symbiosis between Chiang Kai-shek's war against the CCP and the authoritarian government built during the 1950s and 1960s for fighting this war. Resorting to an emotive nationalist appeal of dispelling Soviet imperialism and eradicating the

1 The author thanks one anonymous reviewer for suggesting the concept of "walking dead."

alien communist ideology, Chiang's persistence in regarding the CCP insurgency as unlawfully occupying ROC territory made the nationalist war also a prolonged civil war for recovering ROC sovereignty. Thus the operation of authoritarianism was deeply entwined with the military build-up occurring as part of the promised war to retake mainland China. Arguing that citizens' lives and deaths do not feature significantly in the existing literature regarding the mutually reinforcing constitution of the nationalist war and political repression, this study adopted the analytical concept of necropolitics for its insights into how citizens are essentialised as military resources and indoctrinated by authoritarianism to become selfless nationalist soldiers.

Underlining the cleavages between mainlanders and native Taiwanese within the citizenry, it was found that the indoctrination of Chinese nationalism – in tandem with terror – could not unify the two groups in the face of war. Rather, as understood by Chiang and his military aides, the anticipated war casualties could in fact deepen the existing cleavages. The futility of Project Guoguang shows that the war against the CCP would be, in essence, collective suicide, due to the unlikelihood of overcoming the practical obstacles faced and of securing US support. The fear of the prospect of death – the core challenge to necropolitics – could not be quelled without the terror of the wartime regime, as mandated by the sovereign power.

This paper further found that necropolitics was also embedded in the Othering of citizens according to their political orientations. Those who were included in the category of Self by the authoritarian government were "compatriots" in mainland China and citizens in Taiwan who did not question the legitimacy of anti-communist nationalism. Those who were consigned to the category of Other were the CCP, the PLA, and the denounced CCP sympathisers – liberalists, dissidents, and proponents of independence persecuted for their political beliefs and acts, as well as ordinary citizens who lost their freedom or even their lives to fabricated accusations. Abusing its expedient power to Other citizens, the government deprived some of their lives without even sending them to the battlefield. These critical findings offer fresh insights into our understanding of the founding, implementation, and impact of war-fighting authoritarianism, as an ailing exercise of sovereignty.

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